

**Oversight Hearing on
Proposed FY2005 Budget for the
Metropolitan Police Department**

**Committee on the Judiciary
Kathy Patterson, Chairperson
Council of the District of Columbia**

**Testimony of Charles H. Ramsey
Chief of Police
Metropolitan Police Department**

March 30, 2004

Madame Chair, members of the Committee and Council, staff and guests – thank you for the opportunity to present this opening statement outlining the Metropolitan Police Department’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2005. Other members of the Department’s Command Staff are with me to assist in responding to your questions. The text of my prepared testimony is posted on the Police Department’s website, www.mpdc.dc.gov.

* * * * *

The Department’s proposed operating budget for FY05 is approximately \$398 million dollars from all funding sources. The proposed FY05 budget represents an increase of approximately \$20 million dollars from the Department’s approved budget for FY04, or an increase of about 5.4 percent. Compared with actual spending from FY03, the FY05 budget represents an increase of about 7.3 percent. Of the \$398 million dollar gross budget, \$355 million dollars – or just over 89 percent – is locally funded.

Eighty-four percent of the proposed FY05 local budget – approximately \$298 million dollars – is for “Personal Services” to cover the salaries, fringe benefits and other costs associated with our sworn and civilian employees. The budget supports a total of 4,563 full-time equivalent employees (or FTEs). This represents a slight reduction in the total number of FTEs, which is explained primarily by some interagency changes in responsibility that I will cover later in my testimony. The remaining 16 percent of the budget – approximately \$57 million dollars – covers a variety of “Nonpersonal Services” to include supplies, utilities, telecommunications, rent and the like.

I am pleased to report to the Committee that this budget funds the Department’s major priorities in the areas of sworn staffing, neighborhood patrols and community policing, civilian support, victim services, traffic safety and information technology. For example:

- The proposed budget for “Personal Services” will allow us to maintain our staffing at 3,800 sworn members. Our current, FY04 budget includes funding to support 3,800 officers, and we remain on track to reach that goal by the end of this fiscal year. With the proposed budget for next year, we will be able to stay at 3,800 officers throughout FY05. This is significant because a federal grant (from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services) that has paid for 200 police officers is expiring. The proposed budget for FY05 includes the local “PS” funds to continue supporting these officers. The FY05 budget also includes continued funding for our recruitment efforts. Because of attrition, we will need to recruit and hire additional officers during FY05 in order to remain at the 3,800 level. This budget funds our ongoing recruitment efforts.
- In addition to supporting 3,800 officers, the FY05 budget will enable us to put even more of those officers out on the street – in operational assignments in our neighborhoods. The budget includes \$1.2 million dollars to begin the process of “civilianizing” 83 administrative and support positions that are currently held by sworn police officers. These positions include cellblock technicians, front-desk customer service personnel in our district stations, crime analysts, firearms instructors and others. Recognize that all 83 of these positions will not be civilianized on October 1st, the beginning of the fiscal year. But over the course of the year, we will be able to staff these functions with qualified civilian hires, which will allow us to move more sworn personnel to operational assignments. In his State of the District Address, the Mayor identified civilianization in the MPD as a priority, and this budget is a major step forward in meeting that goal.

The continued funding of 3,800 officers and the proposed civilianization program are critically important to us in FY05. As you know, we are in the process of restructuring our Police Service Areas in order to enhance community policing and improve neighborhood police services. In addition, we have begun an aggressive enforcement program targeting numerous crime “hot spots” throughout the District. The FY05 budget supports both of these neighborhood crime-fighting priorities.

- Also in the area of supporting neighborhood patrols and crime fighting, the FY05 budget includes funds to support necessary overtime costs. As I reported during our agency's performance hearing earlier this month, the MPD significantly reduced overtime spending in FY03, and we continue to be prudent and strategic in our use of overtime in FY04. As you know, there will always be overtime costs associated with officers who have made arrests and are required to appear in court. And although our arrest activity has generally increased in recent months, we have worked with prosecutors and court personnel to try and minimize the amount of money we have to spend on court overtime and the disruption it causes to our operations. In addition, we continue to use our limited discretionary and grant-funded overtime dollars to target specific neighborhood crime-fighting priorities, including narcotics, prostitution, auto theft, serving warrants, underage drinking and drunk driving, to name a few. The FY05 budget proposes a modest increase in overtime, to cover our court-related obligations and to support the additional neighborhood crime-fighting that we are able to pay for using overtime dollars.
- Another priority supported by this budget is traffic safety. Under the proposal, we will be able to expand both our photo radar speeding reduction program and our red-light traffic safety camera program. The safety benefits of these programs are indisputable. In less than three years, photo radar has helped to bring about a dramatic reduction in aggressive speeding, in the enforcement zones where our six mobile cameras are located. We expect to see similarly positive results from our first stationary photo radar camera, which "went live" just this week in the 600 block of Florida Avenue, NE. In terms of red-light running, we have documented a 64 percent reduction in violations at the 39 intersections equipped with traffic safety cameras. Under the proposed budget for FY05, we will be able to bring these life-saving technologies to even more District neighborhoods that continue to face serious problems with aggressive driving.
- The FY05 budget also supports our victim service efforts. Earlier this year, we established our new Family Liaison Specialist Unit, which provides outreach and support to the families of homicide victims. Next year's budget includes funds to continue this small, but critically important unit.
- Next year's budget fully funds the operation of our recently opened firing range at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Cheltenham, Maryland. It will also support the operation of a new, state-of-the-art driving course that will be opening at Cheltenham in the coming months. Our partnership with FLETC is allowing us to expand and professionalize our training, at a cost far less than what we would incur by building and operating our own facility.
- The budget also supports our continuing emergency preparedness and homeland security responsibilities. This is accomplished primarily through federal grants and reimbursements.
- The budget will continue to support our Department's use-of-force reform program. As you know, the MPD signed an historic Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice in June 2001, after serious questions were raised about our Department's policies, procedures and training with respect to use of force. Under this cooperative MOA, the MPD has continued to make dramatic improvements in the use-of-force area – and we have done so without incurring the sizable costs that other cities have been saddled with, as a result of the more adversarial consent decrees handed down by the Justice Department. For example, Chief Bill Bratton recently reported that the consent decree he inherited in Los Angeles is likely to cost the city as much as \$100 million dollars.

One requirement of the MOA is that the Department develop a Personnel Performance Management System, or PPMS. This system is designed to support continuous improvement among all of our sworn and civilian employees by consolidating performance information – including information on citizen complaints and use of force – and providing for early intervention for employees who need assistance in improving their performance. We will achieve dramatic improvements in tracking and reporting use-of-

force incidents and other employee performance measures by utilizing an off-the-shelf commercial product. Using this approach, the MPD will be able to deliver a fully developed PPMS at a fraction of the cost cited by the LAPD, which has a similar requirement under its consent decree.

- One other important capital improvement we anticipate for FY05 is the design and early development of a new property and evidence storage facility. Our need for a new warehouse has existed for some time. Now, with the recent signing of the Millicent Allewelt law – passed under the leadership of Chairperson Patterson – our evidence storage needs will become even greater. Building a new, state-of-the-art evidence storage facility remains a priority.

* * * * *

There are two other significant changes contained in the FY05 budget that I do want to mention. These changes impact not only our staffing and budgeting, but also our operations. As such, implementing these changes will require time and attention from our Department during the remainder of FY04 and into the next fiscal year.

- The first change involves the transfer of responsibility for the DC Protective Services from the Office of Property Management to the MPD. As you know, DC Protective Services provides security for the Wilson Building and other DC government facilities. In the post-“Nine-Eleven” environment, it only makes sense to place accountability for the protection of our local government under one command, which the transfer of responsibility for DC Protective Services will achieve. During emergencies, major events or periods of heightened alert for terrorism, we will have a consolidated and coordinated public safety operation for the District of Columbia and its government – combining the resources of our sworn MPD officers and the Special Police Officers who work in DC Protective Services.

This transfer of responsibility is not simply a matter of moving boxes on an organizational chart or shifting line items in a budget. This move has implications for training, standards, supervision and management. Our Department will be working closely with the Office of Property Management and others to ensure that this transition is well planned and well executed. And we are pleased that the budget includes funds for both the additional personnel we will acquire and the administrative costs associated with these FTEs.

- The second major change involves moving the Public Safety Communication Center – our 9-1-1 and 3-1-1 operation – out of the MPD and into the new Office of Unified Communications. As the District moves to consolidate its various call-taking and dispatch functions in the new Unified Communications Center on the St. Elizabeths campus, it makes sense that the civilian employees who will staff the new UCC would fall under a single command. As with the transfer of DC Protective Services, the realignment of the PSCC will not happen overnight. This move will require considerable planning and management. But the FY05 budget does support this important and, I believe, sensible move.

* * * * *

In closing, let me reaffirm my belief that the FY05 budget, as proposed, funds the most pressing priorities of our Department. The budget supports our enhanced officer staffing level and, through an ambitious program of civilianization, helps to ensure that more of those officers are where they need to be – out in our neighborhoods. The budget supports our continuing efforts in traffic safety, victim services, training and emergency preparedness. And the budget provides for much-needed information technology and facilities projects.

In short, the proposed FY05 budget provides the resources – both personnel and support systems – that we need to meet our overarching priority: to reduce crime and promote a greater sense of safety in DC neighborhoods.

I thank you again for the opportunity to read this statement into the record. My staff and I will be happy to take your questions.